

Remarks

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the foregoing remarks, claims 1-20 are pending in the application, with claims 1 and 11 being the independent claims. Based on the above listing of claims and the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the Examiner's indication that claims 5-10, and 15-20 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of their base claim and any intervening claims.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

In the Office Action, claims 1-4 and 11-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Dinteman, et al, U.S. Patent No. 6,154,715 (Dinteman). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Dinteman describes a integrated circuit (IC) tester 10 that tests an operational circuit on an IC device 12. (Dinteman, Abstract and FIG. 1). The IC tester 10 provides a predefined test signal to the inputs of an operational circuit on IC device 12 over one or more digital channels 14 or over one or more analog channels 16. (Dinteman, col. 3, lines 16-33). The IC tester 10 then samples the output signal returned by the operational circuit on the IC device 12 to determine whether the output signal is behaving as

expected (e.g., has an expected state). (Dinteman, col. 3, lines 60-66; col. 7, lines 54-62). Thus, the IC tester 10 of Dinteman only tests the operation of a circuit on IC device 12.

Dinteman does not teach or suggest all the features recited in Applicants' independent claims 1 and 11. For example, Dinteman does not teach or suggest "receiving at least one digitized sense signal from the integrated circuit chip, whereby the at least one digitized sense signal represents a corresponding process-dependent parameter within the integrated circuit chip," as recited in claims 1 and 11. In the Office Action, the corresponding process-dependent parameters of Applicants' claimed invention are equated to the expected state or data from the DUT. (Office Action, p. 2). Applicants respectfully disagree with this understanding. As described above, Dinteman monitors the output of an operational circuit on an IC device in response to a predefined testing input. Thus, the signal received from the IC device is the output of the operational circuit. The IC device of Dinteman does not provide a digitized sense signal representing a corresponding process-dependent parameter within the integrated circuit chip. For at least this reason, independent claims 1 and 11 are patentable over Dinteman.

Furthermore, Dinteman does not teach or suggest that "the process-dependent parameter is measured within a process monitor portion of the integrated circuit," as recited in independent claims 1 and 11. Specifically, Dinteman does not teach or suggest that the IC device under test 12 has a process monitor portion. Dinteman only describes testing an operational circuit on the IC device 12. For at least this further reason, independent claims 1 and 11 are patentable over Dinteman.

In addition, Dinteman does not teach or suggest that "the at least one determined analog value is utilized to correct for the process-dependent parameter in an operational portion of the integrated circuit," as recited in independent claims 1 and 11. Dinteman describes determining whether an IC device under test passes or fails a predefined test or series of tests. (Dinteman, col. 3, lines 38-42; col. 8, lines 23-30). Dinteman does not teach, suggest, or provide any mechanism for the IC tester to correct for a measured process-dependent parameter in the operational circuit. Dinteman simply measures whether the operational circuit is performing as expected. For at least this additional reason, independent claims 1 and 11 are patentable over Dinteman.

Based on the above, Applicants submit that Dinteman does not teach or suggest every feature recited in Applicants' independent claims 1 and 11. Therefore, Applicants request favorable consideration of independent claims 1 and 11. For at least these reasons, and further in view of their own features, claims 2-4 which depend from claim 1, and claims 12-14 which depend from claim 11, respectively, are patentable over Dinteman. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the ground of rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

Conclusion

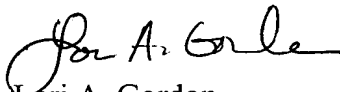
All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for

allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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